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From the Editor: On Men and Women

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From the Editor

On Men and Women

Lisa Sowle Cahill, writing in *Conversations'* 1993 issue on the role of women in Jesuit universities, observed that Jesuit educators are not more guilty of stereotypes and segregation than their peers in the academic enterprise, but that "Jesuits have a greater historical commitment to remedy these faults because of their religious mission of social justice and service..."

As if in fulfillment of her observation, two years later at their 34th General Congregation, Jesuit delegates composed and approved a decree which invited all Jesuits and Jesuit institutions to "align themselves in solidarity with women."

This issue of *Conversations* is our attempt to follow up on both our earlier issue, which had only two feature articles, and on the implementation of the Congregation's decree. As our six feature articles and our forum with seven reports from the field demonstrate, a lot has happened since these questions were first raised. Our formal theme — "Listening to Women: Equity and Impact" — attempts to embrace at least several of the motifs which run through these essays: the struggle for an atmosphere of fairness in which women's talents can thrive and in which they may both grow and lead; a culture of collaboration and friendship between men and women that promotes the intellectual lives of students and faculty alike.

We have included historical notes based on a recent and a forthcoming book on how women gradually became part of what were traditionally all-male institutions.

Meanwhile, as **Hurricane Katrina** ravaged the Gulf Coast, faculty and staff in Jesuit institutions around the country hung by their phones and computer screens waiting anxiously for news from their colleagues in Mobile and New Orleans. Al "Larry" Lorenz, journalism professor at Loyola University New Orleans and co-author of an excellent textbook on reporting, writing from his refuge in Chicago, has recorded the Southern Province's survival story. And one of our student profiles is both by and about two Loyola students who have temporarily migrated to Saint Peter's in Jersey City.

Our cover and a few of the interior collages attempt an impressionistic portrait of the daily lives of many women and a few men at our schools — at least as portrayed in our yearbooks. If you went to Fordham in 1920 you may recognize the ideal young woman in the bright red dress. If you went to or taught at Georgetown, Holy Cross, Fordham, Loyola New Orleans, Rockhurst, Canisius or Saint Peter's between 1968 and today, you may recognize yourself, your son or daughter, or someone you know. ■

RASsj